

**QA-588**

**Ellis and Beatrice White House  
104 Riverside Drive  
Chester vicinity, Queen Anne's County**

**Constructed ca. 1930**

**Private**

The Ellis and Beatrice White House is located at 104 Riverside Drive, on the south side of the street. It stands just over 200 feet east of the intersection of Riverside Drive with Cox Neck Road. The house is situated approximately one-and-a-half miles south of the village of Chester on Kent Island in Queen Anne's County. The White House is a circa 1930, one-story, three-bay, wood-frame cottage, with a rear, one-story, shed-roofed addition. A non-historic, one-story, two-bay, prefabricated metal shed with a gable roof stands to the southeast of the house.

Built circa 1930, the White House stands in a historically African-American maritime community located at the head of one of the branches of Crab Alley. The White House is a modest example of a shotgun house, a folk housing form that was popular throughout the South from the 1880s through the 1930s.



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-588

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Ellis and Beatrice White House

other

### 2. Location

street and number 104 Riverside Drive not for publication

city, town Chester, MD 21619-2316 ☒ vicinity

county Queen Anne's County

### 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Joseph and Marjorie Green

street and number 104 Riverside Drive telephone

city, town Chester state MD zip code 21619-2316

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Queen Anne's County Courthouse liber CWC 43 folio 299

city, town Centreville tax map 57 tax parcel 135 tax ID number 04-020642

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	1 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	0 structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	0 objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	1 Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			0



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## 7. Description

Inventory No. QA-588

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### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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### Summary

The Ellis and Beatrice White House is located at 104 Riverside Drive, on the south side of the street. It stands just over 200 feet east of the intersection of Riverside Drive with Cox Neck Road. The house is situated approximately one-and-a-half miles south of the village of Chester on Kent Island in Queen Anne's County. The White House is a circa 1930, one-story, three-bay, wood-frame cottage, with a rear, one-story, shed-roofed addition. A non-historic, one-story, two-bay, prefabricated metal shed with a gable roof stands to the southeast of the house.

### Description

#### Primary Resource

The White House sits on a small, level, grassy lot. A gravel driveway lies to the west of the house, and poured concrete walkways run both from the street and the driveway to the front stoop. Shrubs line the foundation along the façade. One mature tree sits to the east of the house. Woodland surrounds the lot on the east and south sides. Another building is located to the west of 104 Riverside Drive; there is no demarcation of the dividing property line.

The one-story, gable-front house features an asymmetrically organized façade with a projecting front-gable portico set west of center. It stands on a concrete block foundation that has been clad with metal sheets; the foundation is thus only partially visible, and it was impossible to discern whether or not it is continuous or if it consists of piers. The White House is clad with wood weatherboard and unadorned wood cornerboards. Wood weatherboard also fills the portico's pediment. Square wood posts support the front portico roof, which is clad in asphalt shingles. The portico shelters a concrete block stoop and steps. Wide, overhanging, open eaves with exposed rafter tails mark the cornice line. The roof is sheathed with standing-seam metal, and an interior brick chimney with a corbelled cap is located on the ridgeline south of the center of the house.

The façade fenestration is comprised of paired, one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl windows with square-edged wood surrounds. A nine-light-over-three-panel wood door is set off center on the façade, and displays the same square-edged wood surround. Paired, louvered, wood vents with a square-edged wood surround occupy the front gable; these vents are further adorned with a molded cornice and projecting sill.

The east elevation is composed of three bays, each filled with a one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl window. Like the front-gable vents, these windows feature square-edged wood surrounds with a molded cornice and projecting sill. A vertical trim board is present one-third of the distance back from the façade. A matching vertical piece is found in the same location on the west elevation, suggesting that the front third of the house may be an addition.

The west elevation of 104 Riverside Drive is also made up of three bays, each containing a window that matches that on the east elevation. The rear shed addition contains two bays in its west elevation; one is a vinyl window that matches the rest, with a surround that matches those on the façade. The other is a doorway, which occupies the addition's southernmost bay, and contains a nine-light-over-two-panel, vinyl door.

#### Secondary Resources (buildings, sites, structures, objects.)

One non-historic, pre-fabricated metal shed stands at the southeast corner of the lot.



## 8. Significance

Inventory No. QA-588

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/	<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

### Specific dates

### Architect/Builder

Construction dates ca. 1930

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

### Summary Statement of Significance

Built circa 1930, the White House stands in a historically African-American maritime community located at the head of one of the branches of Crab Alley. The White House is a modest example of a shotgun house, a folk housing form that was popular throughout the South from the 1880s through the 1930s.

### Historical Narrative

Although current tax records indicate that the White House was built in 1943, the current building appears to date to circa 1930.<sup>1</sup> Historic maps suggest that a building was standing in this location by 1904. By the turn of the twentieth century, the east side of Cox Neck Road and Riverside Drive (which leads east from Cox Neck Road to the western branch of Crab Alley) was a relatively densely built-up community of African-American watermen and their families. A 1931 deed for the White House describes Riverside Drive as "a lane leading from the public main road to a colored settlement."<sup>2</sup> Riverside Drive still provides access to the water at a landing located near its terminus. Approximately ten buildings that pre-date 1942 remain in this enclave, along with about eight post-1942 buildings.

From the mid-nineteenth century through the early twentieth century, maritime communities in Queen Anne's County thrived. In the second half of the nineteenth century, commercial oystering and crabbing increased dramatically in the Chesapeake Bay region. This trend particularly affected Kent Island and areas along rivers and creeks in Queen Anne's County. Many African Americans owned their own boats and harvested oysters from the Bay, mainly by the tonging method. The settlement at Cox Neck Road and Riverside Drive was one of several African-American maritime communities that developed by the turn of the twentieth century. Despite dramatic declines in Chesapeake Bay oyster harvests in the 1890s and again in the 1920s, watermen continued to ply the waters of Queen Anne's County in large numbers through the 1950s.<sup>3</sup>

The early twentieth-century owners of the property at 104 Riverside Drive could not be identified. By 1931, the property was owned by Elias W. Nuttle, a white man and a partner in the Nuttle Lumber and Coal Company of Denton, Maryland. In 1931, Ellis and Beatrice White purchased the quarter-acre property from Nuttle, taking out a mortgage for \$858. The Whites married in the 1920s, and in 1930, they lived in the community at Cox Neck Road and Riverside Drive, possibly in the house at 104 Riverside Drive. At that time, Ellis White worked as a laborer on a nearby farm, although he had experience tonging for oysters in the Chesapeake Bay,

<sup>1</sup> U. S. Geological Survey, St. Michaels, MD Quadrangle (15 Minute Series), 1904.

<sup>2</sup> See attached chain of title for this and all subsequent deed references.

<sup>3</sup> Charles B. Clark, *The Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia, Vol. II* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1950), pp. 870-873; Robert J. Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), pp. 408, 321-322, 461-462, 786; Donald G. Shomette, "Kent Narrows Timeline" (Queen Anne's County Heritage Consortium, Chester, Md., 2004, photocopy).



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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. QA-588

Brugger, Robert J. *Maryland: A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.  
Clark, Charles B. *The Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia, Vol. II*. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1950.  
McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.  
Shomette, Donald G. "Kent Narrows Timeline." Queen Anne's County Heritage Consortium, Chester, Md., 2004. Photocopy.  
U. S. Geological Survey. St. Michaels, MD Quadrangle (15 Minute Series), 1904.

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## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 0.24 acres  
Acreage of historical setting 0.24 acres  
Quadrangle name Kent Island Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000 (7.5 minute)

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The property boundary is defined by the current parcel boundaries shown on tax map 57, grid 19, parcel 135 in Queen Anne's County, Maryland.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Kathryn Gettings Smith and Gerald M. Maready, Jr., Architectural Historians		
organization	History Matters, LLC	date	November 16, 2007
street & number	1502 21 <sup>st</sup> Street, NW, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	telephone	202-223-8845
city or town	Washington	state	DC

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Maryland Department of Planning  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name: Ellis and Beatrice White House  
Continuation Sheet

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and may have supplemented the family's income that way. In 1920, he was single, 23 years old, and working with his stepfather, Arthur Hazelton, as an oysterman. At that time, he lived with his stepfather and his mother, Margaret Hazelton, at their house across Riverside Drive on Cox Neck Road (see QA-582 – Hazelton-Green House).

Although in very good condition, the modest size and vernacular form of the Ellis and Beatrice White House reveal little of its age. The building exhibits a traditional, front-gable, "shotgun house" form that was popular especially in southern urban contexts from the 1880s through the 1930s.<sup>4</sup> This example features exposed rafter tails in its overhanging eaves and molded, wood lintels over the windows.

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<sup>4</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), p. 90.



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-588

Name: Ellis and Beatrice White House  
Continuation Sheet

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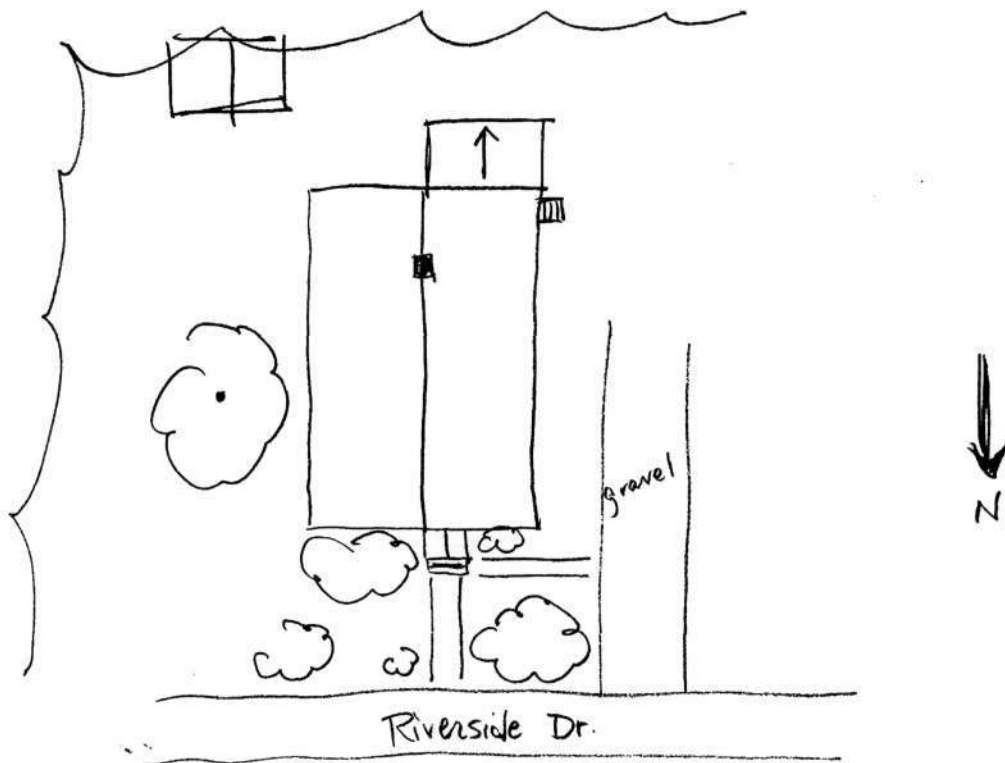
### Chain of Title

15 August 1969	Beatrice White (widow) to Joseph & Marjorie Green Liber CWC 43, folio 299 1/4 acre in Coxes Neck on KI on a lane leading from the public main road to a colored settlement; Ellis White (husband) died April 26, 1964.
30 April 1931	Elias W. Nuttle to Ellis White & Beatrice White Liber BHT 12, folio 587 1/4 acre
30 April 1931	Mortgage: Ellis White and Beatrice White promissory note for \$858 to Elias W. Nuttle, Frank L.R. Nuttle, and Fred B. Nuttle, co-partners trading as Nuttle Lumber and Coal Company of Denton MD Liber BHT 12, folio 588

*Prior to 1931 there is a break in the chain of title. Efforts to locate Elias Nuttle's acquisition of the property in the grantee index were unsuccessful.*



104 Riverside Dr.

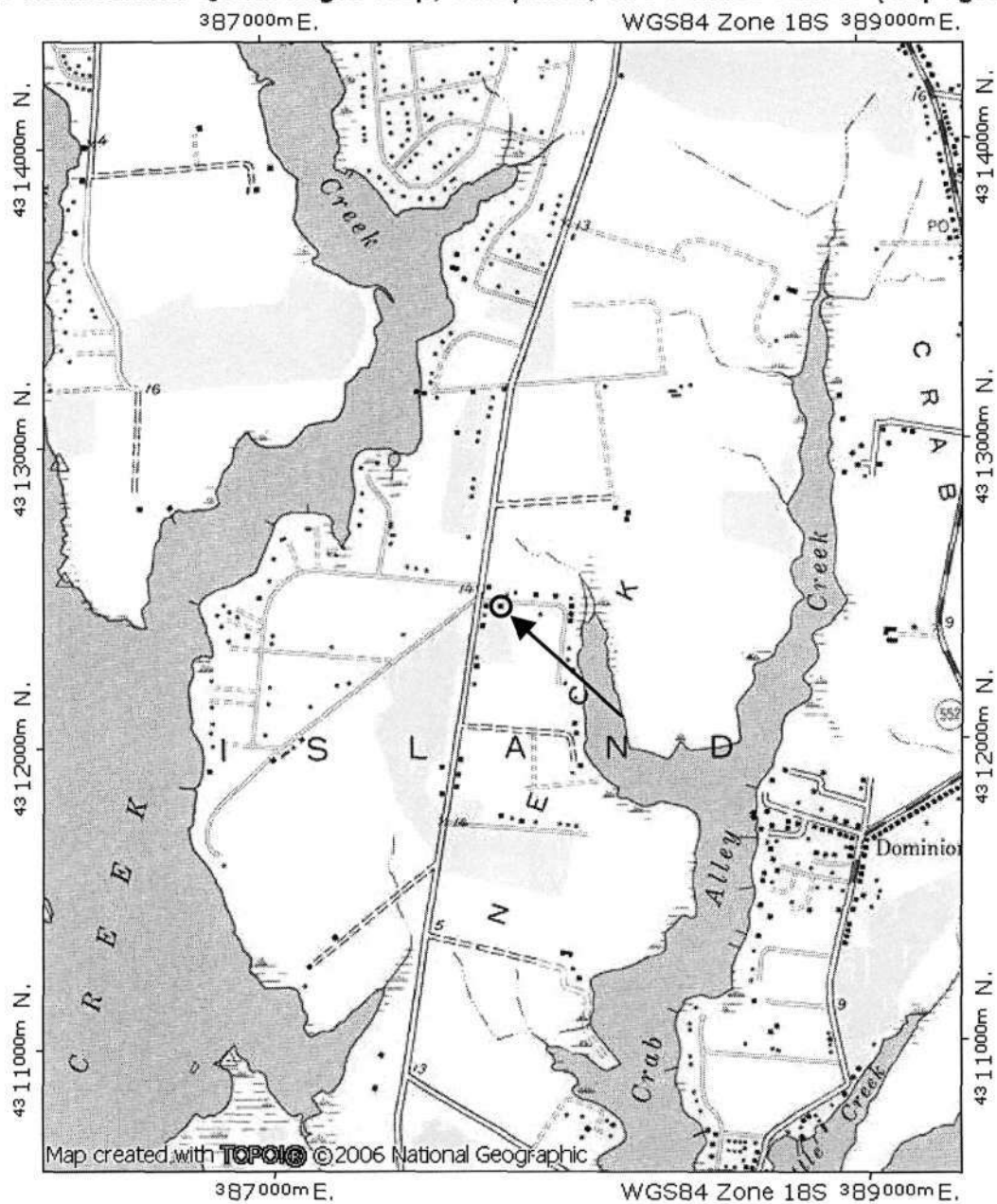


not to scale

Site Plan  
QA—588  
Ellis and Beatrice White House  
104 Riverside Drive  
Chester  
Queen Anne's County, Maryland



# USGS Kent Island Quadrangle Map, Maryland, 7.5 Minute Series (Topographic)



**QA-588**  
**Ellis and Beatrice White House**  
**104 Riverside Drive**  
**Chester vicinity**  
**Queen Anne's County**

0.0 0.5 1.0 miles  
 0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 km

MN T  
 11½°  
 05/09/07







QA-588

ELLIS AND BEATRICE WHITE HOUSE  
104 RIVERSIDE DR., CHESTER

QUEEN ANNE'S CO., MD

HISTORY MATTERS LLC

4/2007

MD SHPO

NORTH + WEST ELEVATIONS, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

1 of 2







QA-588

ELLIS AND BEATRICE WHITE HOUSE

104 RIVERSIDE DR., CHESTER

QUEEN ANNE'S CO., MD

HISTORY MATTERS, LLC

4/2007

MD SHPO

NORTH + EAST ELEVATIONS, LOOKING SOUTHWEST

2 of 2